



Committee on Homeland Security

Democrats

**Bennie G. Thompson, Ranking
Member**

www.house.gov/hsc/democrats/

April 27, 2005

Contact: Nadra Harrison
202.226.2616

DEMOCRATS INTRODUCE AMENDMENT ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS:

“Helping First Responders Get the Job Done”

April 27, 2005, Washington, DC — Democrats on the House Committee on Homeland Security will offer legislation that provides for full funding for America’s first responders in today’s open markup session to consider the Department of Homeland Security Authorization Act for fiscal year 2006.

Congressman Bill Pascrell (D-NJ), Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Science and Technology introduced the amendment. Pascrell stated, **“We must ensure that first responders have the tools necessary to do their jobs. On September 11th, the inability of first responders to communicate effectively hindered the overall response and cost many first responders their lives.”**

If the emergency preparedness amendment passes, it will make certain first responders had funding to purchase and upgrade communications equipment so they could achieve interoperable communications with each other. In addition to providing more funding, the Department will be responsible for creating an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Administration, within the Emergency Preparedness and Response Directorate, to coordinate and advocate EMS issues within the Department. Two other provisions in the amendment allow state emergency managers to have direct access to grant funding and authorizes the Citizen Corps program \$50 million dollars to make sure that the American public is fully prepared for a terrorist attack, as well as properly trained to provide aid in the event of an attack.

###